

---

# Wisconsin Forestry Notes

---

April 2003

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

---

## Firewise Program Coming to Wisconsin

*“Managing the wildland urban interface fire issue within a local community is the key to creating a safer, more fire-ready Wisconsin,” according to DNR forest fire program officials. They are planning to bring the Firewise program to Wisconsin to meet this need.*

The Wisconsin DNR – Division of Forestry is exploring a new program focusing on homes built in or near wildland areas – commonly referred to as the ‘wildland urban interface’. The Firewise Communities/USA recognition program is a proactive opportunity available to fire-prone communities that teaches them to protect themselves from a wildfire before it occurs. This program recognizes communities that have significantly reduced wildland urban interface home loss by focusing on a home and its immediate surroundings. The initiative, with the assistance of the local fire officials, assesses a ‘community’ in terms of its wildfire potential. These ‘communities’ can be defined as a neighborhood, sub-division, home/lake association, or a specified grouping of homes. Managing the wildland urban interface fire issue at home, within a community, is the key to creating a safer, more fire-ready Wisconsin. For more information, contact [Catherine Regan](#) at 608-266-2359 or visit the [Firewise website](#).

## Wisconsin Communities Earn Forestry Honors

*143 Wisconsin communities recognize the many ways urban forests improve the quality of life for their residents and were honored for their investment in this important resource.*

DNR Secretary Scott Hassett recognized Wisconsin communities last week for the investment they’ve made in their urban forests. During a March 27 ceremony at Madison’s Monona Terrace, 143 communities were honored with the designation of “Tree City USA.” The Tree City USA program recognizes communities that make a commitment to the planting and care of trees. The program’s purpose is to promote public awareness of tree benefits and stimulate public support for healthy and abundant community forests. Wisconsin ranks third in the nation for the number of communities earning this recognition. Eight of the communities were first-time recipients while Sheboygan received the honor for the 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. Among the honored communities, 26 went above and beyond the standards for Tree City USA certification to earn a “growth award” and eight utilities earned “Tree Line USA” designation, which recognizes public and private utilities that demonstrate practices that protect and enhance urban forests. This program promotes dual goals of dependable utility service and abundant, healthy trees along streets and highways. All of these are programs of the [National Arbor Day Foundation](#) and administered in Wisconsin by the DNR Division of Forestry. A complete list of the award recipients is on the [DNR Website](#). For more information about these programs, contact [Richard Rideout](#) at 608-267-0843.

## Contracting for Forest Management Plans

Due to the record number of new Managed Forest Law (MFL) applications this year, the Forest Tax Section is once again contracting for the preparation of some of the management plans required for entry into the program. There were 4182 new applications for 2004. Of these, 696 plans will be contracted to private consultants. Thirteen contractors were contacted to work on these plans in 19 counties across the State. This is still less than the number of plans contracted last year and field foresters will be working full speed in order to get all the plans prepared in time along with their other duties.

*Due to workload of forest landowner applications to join the Managed Forest Law in 2004, nearly 700 of the necessary management plans will be prepared by private cooperating foresters.*

Without contracting for management plans, this workload would have meant each private lands forester would have had to complete 52 management plans this season. Even with contracting for these plans, DNR foresters will average 47 comprehensive management plans per FTE by summer's end. Had additional funds been available this year, we could have easily contracted twice the number of plans. For more information, contact [Linda DePaul](#) at 608-266-3545.

## Flexibility for Timber Salvage Proposed

An Assembly proposal expands the authority of DNR and counties to sell timber damaged by fire, wind, snow, hail or ice in a manner that the DNR or county considers the best interest of the state or county. AB13 does not provide *additional* harvest opportunities, but provides more flexibility in salvaging damaged timber in those areas ultimately scheduled for timber harvest. These changes should facilitate more efficient salvage and responsiveness in storm cleanup. Previously, the flexibility to direct sale storm-damaged timber was limited to State Parks and State Forests that had suffered fire or wind damage only. This bill expands this authority to also include snow, hail and ice on any lands under the State's jurisdiction (including County Forests). The Assembly committee on Forestry heard the bill on February 11 and proposed an amendment. Assembly Amendment 1, introduced March 10, adds insects and disease to the list of damaging agents. The DNR supports AB13, as amended.

*Assembly measure would lend flexibility to salvage timber damaged by fire or storms in the best interest of the state or counties, but would NOT provide additional harvest opportunities.*

## Comments to be prepared on federal plan

It has been many years in the making but the forest plan revision for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is set to be released for comment on April 11, 2003. The 90-day comment period will end on July 10, 2003. The DNR will be formulating comments on the Draft plan and DEIS. A multi-disciplinary approach will be taken to provide one consolidated Department response to the plan revision. A staff team and a team of expanded reviewers have been consulting with the Forest Service periodically over the past year and will continue to meet with them during the comment period. Comments of the staff and expanded review teams will be reviewed by a steering team comprised of Northern Region and Central Office management staff. Contact person is [Jeff Barkley](#) in the DNR Division of Forestry.

*Wisconsin DNR will be submitting multi-disciplinary comments on the draft plan for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in Northern Wisconsin.*

---

"Wisconsin Forestry Notes" is a monthly electronic publication highlighting programs and activities of the Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry, Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707  
Phone: 608-267-7494      [Paul DeLong](#), Chief State Forester      [Kirsten Held](#), Editor

To add or delete yourself from this distribution list, send an e-mail with "Wisconsin Forestry Notes" in the subject line to: ["forestry.webmail@dnr.state.wi.us"](mailto:forestry.webmail@dnr.state.wi.us)

---